

## about

# LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, QUESTIONING Youth in Fairfax County

## what you need to know...

Nine percent of teens in Fairfax County self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning (LGBQ). Many report involvement and support in their families, schools, and community; however, some LGBQ youth face disproportionate challenges.

Depressive symptoms (feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that they stopped doing some usual activities) affect 49% of LGBQ youth and 38% have seriously considered suicide.

Thirty-one percent of LGBQ youth have used alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs in the past 30 days. These youth (24%) report similarly as non-LGBQ youth (22%) for alcohol use and

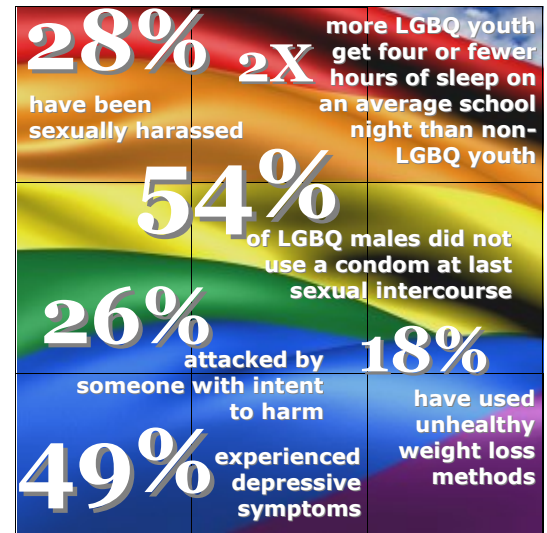
marijuana use (13% vs. 11%); however, LGBQ youth are twice as likely to use cigarettes (10% vs. 5%) and inhalants (3%) as heterosexual youth (1.4%).

Sixty-one percent of LGBQ youth report that they have been bullied in the past year. These youth are almost twice as likely to report being a victim of chronic bullying as non-LGBQ youth.

LGBQ youth also face greater risk of becoming a victim of sexual harassment, dating abuse, an attack with intent to harm, an attack with a weapon, or cyberbullying.

LGBQ youth who can turn to family and other people in their lives for support are at relatively less risk. They are less likely to

Fairfax County 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-grade LGBQ youth self-reported behavior



Fairfax County Youth Survey Report

abuse drugs, report depressive symptoms, and have sex than LGBQ youth without support.

## what can you do?

### understand, encourage, learn, and act

- **Engage your teen.** Parents should talk openly with their teen about any problems or concerns and be watchful of risk factors such as bullying, depression or expression of suicidal thoughts.
- **Understand the link between your reaction and your teen's mental and physical health.** Supportive reactions can help youth cope with the challenges of being LGBQ. Negative reactions are linked to higher rates of homelessness, running away, and mental and physical problems.
- **Familiarize yourself with local and national resources.** When youth reveal same-sex attractions and relationships, this is an opportunity to better inform and support LGBQ youth and families by linking them with community resources. LGBQ youth may also need access to qualified health care professionals with experience in working with LGBQ youth.
- **Find out what kind of support, services, and education are in place at your teen's school.** A positive school climate has been associated with a decreased risk for mental health concerns, substance abuse, and unexcused school absences among LGBQ youth. In schools with LGBQ support groups (such as gay-straight alliances), LGBQ students were also more likely to have positive outcomes.
- **Ask your teen before you "come out" to others on your teen's behalf.** Disclosure of a youth's sexual orientation or gender identity is a process. Be careful in your discussion with others to protect your teen's privacy.
- **Advocate for your teen.** Support legislation that provides funding to implement anti-bullying policies that include protections for LGBQ youth, support research on bullying among LGBQ students, and support bullying prevention programs that address homophobia.



Sources: adapted from

[cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm](http://cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm) and [stopbullying.gov/at-risk/groups/lgbt](http://stopbullying.gov/at-risk/groups/lgbt)

## who can help?



### Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB)

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb) | Entry & Referral 703-383-8500 | TTY 711  
24-Hour Emergency Services 703-573-5679 | TTY 703-207-7737

### Fairfax County Public Schools Intervention and Prevention Services

[www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/](http://www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/) | 571-423-4020 | TTY 711

### Fairfax County Public Schools School Counseling Services

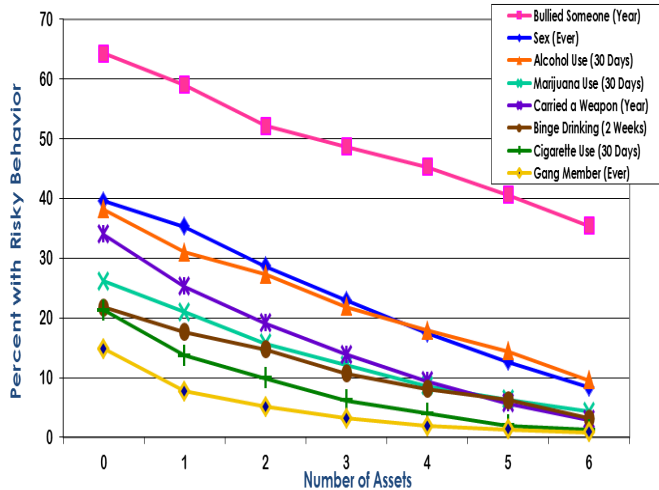
[www.fcps.edu/is/schoolcounseling](http://www.fcps.edu/is/schoolcounseling) | 571-423-4421 | TTY 711



Countywide Service Integration and Planning Management

# THREE TO SUCCEED

## Thriving in Fairfax



**Three to Succeed** is based on the Youth Survey analysis that shows having **just three assets** dramatically **reduces risk behaviors** and **promotes thriving youth**.

Assets are strengths in young people, their families, friends, schools and communities that help them thrive in health, in school, in daily life, and in a safe environment. The more assets a person has, the fewer

risk behaviors they report and the Youth Survey shows that every asset makes a difference.

Young people in Fairfax County report positive influences from the people and other assets in their lives, though there are disparities that make it more challenging for some to thrive. Take action to be an asset in any young person's life and help build a stronger, more positive community that benefits ALL children.

### Assets

Having High Personal Integrity  
Performing Community Service  
Having Teachers Recognize Good Work  
Having Community Adults to Talk to  
Participating in Extracurricular Activities  
Having Parents Available for Help

## Victimization

	LGBQ	Hetero-sexual
Bullying	61%	50%
Cyberbullying	24%	15%
Threatened or Attacked With a Weapon	12%	6%
Physically Forced to Have Sex	9%	3%

## Depression and Suicide

	LGBQ	Hetero-sexual
Depression	49%	28%
Considered Suicide	38%	15%
Attempted Suicide	13%	4%

The LGBQ data presented represents the responses of **youth who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning (not sure)**.

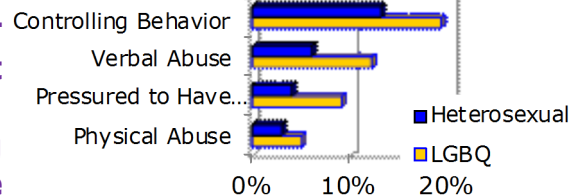
The Fairfax County Youth Survey was administered in the fall semester of 2013.

## Sexual Health

	LGBQ	Hetero-sexual
Ever Had Sex	25%	19%
Ever Had Oral Sex	26%	22%
Had Sex Before Age 13*	22%	10%
4 or More Sex Partners*	33%	25%

\*Of youth who have had sex.

## A Closer Look at Teen Dating Abuse



## websites for more information

**Fairfax County Youth Survey**  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: LGBT Youth Resources  
[www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/disparities/smy.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/disparities/smy.htm)  
[www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth-resources.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth-resources.htm)

Health and Human Services Talking with Teens LGBT Youth  
[www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/info/parents/just-facts/lgbtq-youth.html](http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/info/parents/just-facts/lgbtq-youth.html)

FCPS: Resiliency  
[www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/resiliency/resources/fcpsresources.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/resiliency/resources/fcpsresources.shtml)



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## protective factors

LGBQ Youth in Fairfax County report they

- Have opportunities to be involved in school activities (92%)\*\*, and that teachers notice their good work (62%).
- Volunteer for community service regularly (44%).
- Have parents they can go to for help (66%)\*\* and they are involved in family decisions that affect them (53%)\*\*.

\*\* Data results are based on the 2012 Fairfax County Youth Survey, the most current available.



To request this information in an alternate format, call the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, 703-324-4600, TTY 711.

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